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## THE MOLLY MAGUIRES IN THE ANTHRACITE REGION OF PENNSYLVANIA<sup>1</sup>

HOLDING a brief for the Historic Muse it might seem fitting that I should treat in a general way of the study and writing of history but in a number of addresses before learned societies and to university students I have gathered everything in my power from this well-reaped field. To recombine and restate what I have already said would in no way be worthy of this occasion and I think that I can better serve my muse.

Someone asked Jowett, Is logic a science or an art? Neither, he said, it is a dodge. And some scoffers, impressed with the saying attributed to Napoleon that "history is lies agreed upon", have answered likewise the same question when applied to history. Napoleon, indeed, struck at two of the masters when he said that Tacitus writes romances, Gibbon is no better than a man of sounding words. Therefore it has seemed to me that the relation of an episode, which has been investigated according to the modern method, will better show our aim at the truth than a laudation over results that have been accomplished. And I have chosen an episode into which no question of party politics intrudes; the operations of the Molly Maguires in the Anthracite coal region of Pennsylvania between 1865 and 1876.

The name and organization of this hide-bound secret order—the Molly Maguires—came from Ireland; no one but an Irish Roman Catholic was eligible for membership. During the Civil War there had been an enormous demand for anthracite coal at high prices and this had caused a large influx of foreigners, Irish, English, Welsh, Scotch, and Germans, so that the colliery towns were under their control; and the Irish from their number and aggressiveness were the most important single factor. Many of the Mollies were miners and the mode of working the mines lent itself to their peculiar policy. Miners were paid by the cubic yard, by the mine car, or by the ton, and, in the driving of entries, by the lineal yard. In the assignment of places which was made by the mining boss there were "soft" jobs and hard. If a Molly applied for a soft job and was refused, his anger was great and not infrequently in due time

<sup>1</sup> Paper read at the first public meeting of the American Academy of Arts and Letters in Washington, December 14-16, 1909.

the offending boss was murdered. If he got employment, there was constant chance for disagreement in measuring up the work and in estimation of the quality of the coal mined, for it was the custom to dock the miners for bad coal with too much slate and dirt, and a serious disagreement was apt to be followed by vengeance. Little wonder was it that, as the source of the outrages was well understood, mining bosses refused to employ Irishmen, but this did not insure their safety, as they might then be murdered for their refusal. A good superintendent of any colliery would, in his quality of superior officer, support an efficient mining boss and would thus fall under the ban himself.

The murders were not committed in the heat of sudden passion for some fancied wrong; they were the result of a deliberate system. The wronged individual laid his case before a proper body demanding the death, say, of a mining boss, and urging his reasons. If they were satisfying, as they usually were, the murder was decreed but the deed was not ordered to be done by the aggrieved person or by anyone in his and the victim's neighborhood. Two or more Mollies from a different part of the county, or even from the adjoining county, were selected to do the killing because, being unknown, they could the more easily escape detection. Refusal to carry out the dictate of the conclave was dangerous and seldom happened, although an arrangement of substitution, if properly supported, was permitted to be made. The meeting generally took place in an upper room of a hotel or saloon and, after the serious business, came the social reunion with deep libations of whiskey.

During the decade beginning in 1865 a great many men were killed to satisfy the revengeful spirit of the Molly Maguires. Some of the victims were men so useful, conspicuous, and so beloved in their communities that their assassination caused a profound and enduring impression.

While the murders were numerous, still more numerous were the threats of murder and warnings to leave the country written on a sheet of paper with a rude picture of a coffin or a pistol and sometimes both. One notice read, "Mr. John Taylor—We will give you one week to go but if you are alive on next Saturday you will die." Another, to three bosses, charged with "cheating thy men" had a picture of three pistols and a coffin and on the coffin was written, "This is your home." In other mining districts and in manufacturing localities, during strikes and times of turbulence, similar warnings have been common and have been laughed at by mining bosses, superintendents, and proprietors; but, in the anthracite region be-

tween 1865 and 1876, the bravest of men could not forget how many of his fellows had been shot nor suppress a feeling of uneasiness when he found such a missive on his door-step or posted up on the door of his office at the mine. Many a superintendent and mining boss left his house in the morning with his hand on his revolver, wondering if he should ever see wife and children again.

The young men of the order were selected for the commission of murder; above them were older heads holding high office and, in a variety of ways, displaying executive ability. They were quick to see what a weapon to their hand was universal suffrage, and, with the aptitude for politics which the Irish have shown in our country, they developed their order into a political power to be reckoned with. Numbering in Schuylkill County only 500 or 600 out of 5000 Irishmen in a total population of 116,000, the Molly Maguires controlled the common schools and the local government of the townships in the mining sections of the county. They elected at different times three county commissioners and came near electing one of their number, who had acquired twenty thousand dollars worth of property, associate judge of the Court of Oyer and Terminer. In one borough a Molly was chief of police; another in Mahanoy township, Jack Kehoe, was high constable. In the elections were fraudulent voting, stuffing of the ballot-boxes, and false returns; in the administration of the offices, fraud and robbery.

Despite the large number of murders by Molly Maguires from 1865 to 1875 there were few arrests, few trials, and never a conviction for murder in the first degree. The defense usually relied on was an alibi, made fairly easy to establish as the men who did the killing were unknown in the locality of it, and as there were Mollies in abundance equal to any amount of false and hard swearing at the dictation of their order.

During the summer and autumn of 1874 the Molly Maguires were at the height of their power, yet, while there was nothing in sight menacing their dominion, operations against them had been commenced by Franklin B. Gowen. Shortly after coming of age, Gowen, in company with others, had worked a mine in Schuylkill County, but, owing to the aftermath of the panic of 1857, his venture had not been successful. He turned to the study of law and was admitted to the Schuylkill County bar, was elected district attorney, and later, securing a large and lucrative practice, became attorney for the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad, and in 1869, at the age of thirty-three, its president. He organized the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company, which secured an immense

amount of coal-land and became the largest producer of anthracite coal. He knew Schuylkill County through and through and made up his mind that a regular and profitable conduct of mining operations would become impossible, should the terror of the Molly Maguires continue and grow. As the guardian of the great Reading property, he felt it his duty to break up the criminal organization, and in addition to his local knowledge and experience he possessed peculiar qualities for the work. With restless ability and indomitable energy, he combined in a remarkable degree both physical and moral courage. He was convinced that the Molly Maguires could be exposed only by the employment of secret detectives and, with this view, he applied to Allan Pinkerton of Chicago, "an intelligent and broad-minded Scotchman". Pinkerton chose James McParlan, a native of Ireland and a Roman Catholic, who coming to Chicago in 1867 had been a teamster, the driver of a meat wagon, a deck-hand on a lake steamer, a wood-chopper in the wilds of Michigan, a private coachman in Chicago, a policeman and detective, then an employé in a wholesale liquor establishment, developing from this into the proprietor of a liquor store and a saloon. The store burned down in the great fire of 1871 and, as the saloon was no longer remunerative, he sold it out and, in April, 1872, went into the employ of Allan Pinkerton. In October, 1873, at the age of twenty-nine, he reported to the Pinkerton agent in Philadelphia for orders, with the understanding that he was to receive twelve dollars a week as his salary and, in addition, his expenses. After some preliminary observation of his field, he took up his residence in the anthracite region in the following December, first at Pottsville, then at Shenandoah. Under a disguise and the assumed name of James McKenna, McParlan was a "broth of a boy" who could sing a song, dance a jig, pass a rough joke, and stand treat, apparently taking his full share of whiskey, which was the usual beverage. Still other qualities were needed; so he said he had killed his man in Buffalo and was a fugitive from justice. Supposedly a workman, he got a job, but found this too confining and laborious and soon appreciated that it was unnecessary for his object. But he had to account for the money which he spent freely and, quickly learning that honest labor was no recommendation to the Molly Maguires, he concocted the story that he was in receipt of a pension from the United States Government, fraudulently obtained, and that he was also a counterfeiter engaged in "shoving the queer". This latter proved a clever device as it explained both his ready command of money and the frequent journeys from place to place, which were necessary in his

work of detection, warning, and prevention of crime. The tale, as McParlan told it on the witness stand, is better than any detective story, for it is based on a diary of actual happenings in the shape of regular written reports to a superior officer in Philadelphia. McParlan gained the confidence of his brother Irishmen and Catholics and, on April 14, 1874, was initiated into the order and became a full-fledged Molly Maguire. Loud, brawling, boastful of crimes, and in education superior to most of his fellows, he was soon chosen secretary of his division, the duties and privileges of which office made him a local leader, gave him an insight into the secret workings of the order, and imparted to him a knowledge of their past crimes and projected murders. While he was working with zeal and discretion, learning each week something more of their practices and plans of operation, other events were tending towards the end.

In 1875 there was a recrudescence of Molly Maguire outrages. As the result of a certain feud, a Molly, in accordance with the rule of the organization, brought his case before a convention held in a second-story room of a hotel in Mahanoy City. He maintained that he had been shot at and that it was the intention of two brothers named Major and of one "Bully Bill", otherwise William M. Thomas, a Welshman, to kill him. He therefore asked his society to put these three men out of the way. The meeting to consider this request was opened with prayer and presided over by Jack Kehoe, the county delegate of Schuylkill, the highest officer in the county organization. There were also present the county delegate of Northumberland, three body-masters (the body-master was the chief officer of the division), three other officers, and James McParlan (McKenna), our detective, and secretary of the Shenandoah division. The matter was discussed, and after some consideration a motion was made that Thomas and the Major brothers be killed; it was carried. The mode of the killing caused some discussion, but there seemed to be no lack of men ready and willing to do the job. In the end, certain Mollies were agreed upon and selected for the murders, McParlan being one of those assigned for the dispatch of Thomas. There being no further business before the meeting, it adjourned in due form. Having doubtless taken many drinks of whiskey, the Mollies dined at the tavern, when, so the account reads, other matters were sociably discussed.

On the morning of June 28, four Mollies from Shenandoah of the ages from nineteen to twenty-three, started out to kill Thomas, expecting to shoot him as he walked towards the drift-mouth of Shoemaker's colliery, a mile from Mahanoy City. Thomas was in

the stable talking to the stable-boss. The hour of half-past six arrived and the Mollies, becoming impatient that he did not come out, started towards the stable. When they reached the door, one fired at Thomas, hitting him in the breast. Thomas jumped towards the man, grasped the revolver, when a second bullet took effect; then another Molly shot him twice in the neck, one wound being within a quarter of an inch of the jugular vein; the other two fired but apparently did not hit the victim; Thomas, covered with blood, fell and crawled under the horses that had not been hit; one horse was killed and another wounded. Thinking that Thomas was dead the assassins fled to Shenandoah and "wet with sweat" found McParlan and reported what they had done.<sup>2</sup>

Jimmy Kerrigan, the body-master of the Tamaqua division, Schuylkill County, and his chum, Thomas Duffy, hard drinkers, reckless and quarrelsome in their cups, had been arrested and imprisoned more than once by the police; they had conceived therefore a violent hatred against Policeman Yost, who with an associate constituted the night watch of Tamaqua, and who on one occasion had overcome the resistance of Duffy by beating him on the head with his club. Yost was a man of good character, kindly nature, and popular in the community, but the Tamaqua division decided that he must die.

At the same time the Mollies of Storm Hill, Carbon County, had determined upon the murder of John P. Jones, a mining boss in the employ of the Lehigh and Wilkesbarre Coal Company, because it was supposed that he had blacklisted William Mulhall and Hugh McGehan. An exchange of "Mollie courtesies" was at once suggested and decided upon. Carbon County Mollies were to be sent over for the murder of Yost and in return Schuylkill Mollies would undertake to put Jones out of the way. Yost was to be assassinated first and the time fixed upon was the early morning of July 6 at the hour when he should extinguish the last gas light in the town. Mulhall, who was a married man with a large family, was relieved from the work and James Boyle, being conveniently at hand, was substituted in his place.

McGehan and Boyle, the Carbon County representatives, came to Tamaqua and were guided by Kerrigan and Duffy. About mid-

<sup>2</sup> Although Thomas was not killed, his doom and the assault on him was a characteristic incident. The limit of this paper does not permit me, however, to enlarge upon its importance. In the Court of Quarter Sessions, Schuylkill County, Jack Kehoe and a number of other Molly Maguires were convicted for aggravated assault and battery with intent to kill William M. Thomas, and, in a trial immediately thereafter, for conspiracy to murder the Majors.

night Duffy took the two to the cemetery and returned to the Union House, an inn kept by a prominent Molly, so that he might prove an alibi when, as was highly probable, suspicion fell upon him. Somewhat later Kerrigan took a bottle of whiskey to the cemetery, but the drink was for himself and Boyle, as McGehan, who was a tall young man (about twenty-two) of powerful frame with brawny arms, never touched a drop of liquor. Kerrigan led the two to the street lamp and placed them under the shade trees near by. After a while Yost and his associate watchman appeared and went into Yost's house to get something to eat. Coming out at a little after two o'clock Yost went at once to the lamp-post, placed his ladder against it, began to climb the ladder, heard footsteps behind him, and turned round to see who was coming from under the trees. As he turned, McGehan reached up and shot him in the right side. Yost fell off the ladder, exclaiming "Oh my God! I am shot, my wife!" His wife leaning out of the window saw him climbing the ladder, saw the flash of the pistol, heard that and a second report, the scream of her husband, the sound of retreating footsteps, and, rushing downstairs and out, found him mortally wounded. "Give me a kiss", he said, "I am shot and have to die." Later to his brother-in-law he said, "This is the last of me; I must die; I have been so long in the army and escaped, and now I must be shot innocently." He died that day but not before stating that he had seen his murderers plainly, they were both Irishmen but neither was Kerrigan nor Duffy who were the only enemies he had in the world.

Kerrigan piloted McGehan and Boyle away to a point whence they could easily return to their own county. McGehan boasted to Kerrigan of the deed. "I dislike", he said, "to draw Irish blood but I want no better sport than to shoot such men as Yost. When he was shot he 'hollered' like a panther." The murderers reached their homes without apprehension. Not until seven months afterwards were they arrested.

McGehan became a hero. All the Mollies admired his "clean job", for which it was generally recognized a suitable reward should be given. A leading Molly of Carbon County, Campbell, bestirred himself in his behalf and started him in a saloon near Storm Hill.

I pass over two murders by Mollies in August to the murder of Thomas Sanger. An Englishman, thirty-three years old, of good character and amiable disposition, a mining boss at Ravens Run colliery, he had somehow incurred the ill-will of some of the Molly Maguires and he was doomed to die. On the morning of September 1, a little before seven o'clock, as he walked towards the mine to

set the men to work, he was attacked by five Mollies, shot and killed, as was also William Uren, a young man who was with him and interfered in his defense. Although a hundred men and boys witnessed the assault, they were so terrified by the promiscuous firing that they made no attempt to arrest the Mollies who escaped to the mountains.

The sensation in Schuylkill and Carbon counties was profound. The victims had been Welsh, Pennsylvania-German, or English, and the feeling of their blood-brothers towards the Irish Catholics was growing into a keen desire for vengeance.

But the day of reckoning was at hand although the Mollies, arrogant in their success, drunk with deeds of violence and thirsting for blood, little recked that the period of their dominion was drawing to an end.

It will be remembered that in return for the murder of Yost, the Schuylkill County Mollies had promised to kill John P. Jones, a Welshman, a mining boss at Storm Hill, Carbon County. Through McParlan, he had been put on his guard and for a number of weeks had slept at the house of his superintendent under guard of Coal and Iron policemen. The changes of design and shifting of plans were so frequent that the detective was unable to trace them all, and he hoped that this project had been abandoned when the community received another shock in the following manner.

Jimmy Kerrigan, who knew the by-paths in this difficult mountainous country, led Edward Kelly, whose selection had been by lot, and Michael J. Doyle (who had volunteered to take the place of a married man with a family) into Carbon County and they stopped all night with Campbell, in whose saloon they were well entertained. Jones, passing the first night for a long while in his own house, left it, after taking breakfast and chatting with his family, at a little after seven on the morning of September 3, to go to the mining superintendent's office near the railroad station. As the train from Tamaqua was nearly due, a hundred men, miners and railroad employees, were about the place. As Jones approached them, two strange men suddenly stepped forward and fired a number of balls into his body, killing him almost instantly; at once they fled to the mountains. Wild excitement prevailed at the station but the mining superintendent kept his head and organized a party for pursuit. Jimmy Kerrigan led his two men by unfrequented roads and by-paths and, eluding all pursuers, got them safely by Tamaqua, five miles from the scene of murder. Had he kept on, instead of stopping to show his hospitality, he could have taken them to Tuscarora, where there was a nest of Molly Maguires. Some of these could easily

have conducted the assassins to Pottsville, where, merged in the crowd, detection would have been impossible. But when they had left Tamaqua behind and were near his own house Kerrigan left them in the bush and went home to get them whiskey and something to eat.

Meanwhile Beard, a young law student, who had seen the dead body of Jones immediately after the murder and was one of the first to bring the news of it to Tamaqua, happened to hear that Jimmy Kerrigan with two strange men had been seen west of the town. Going to a hill whence with a spy-glass a pretty good view of the surrounding country could be obtained he saw Kerrigan wave a handkerchief, whereupon two other men appeared and the three went to a spring on the side of the mountain. Hurrying back to town, Beard together with an elder brother mustered a force of twenty, went out to the bush, captured Kerrigan and his associates and bringing them to town had them confined in the Tamaqua lockup. They were surrendered to the deputy sheriff of Carbon County on his properly supported demand.

The trial of the murderers of Jones which had been fixed for October 19 was postponed on sufficient ground; and, as it was well understood that strong evidence for an alibi was being manufactured and as the Molly Maguires were at the height of their political power, fears were entertained by many that the assassins would escape the punishment which was justly their due. But these people had no conception of the impending doom of the terrible order owing to the irrefragable evidence gathered by McParlan, the energy and discretion of Gowen and Parrish,<sup>3</sup> and the high character of the bench and bar of Carbon and Schuylkill counties.

On January 18, 1876, the trial of the three assassins of Jones began at Mauch Chunk before Judge Dreher. Assisting the district attorney in the prosecution were Charles Albright and F. W. Hughes, one a Democrat, the other a Republican, who had clasped hands in the determination to root out the Molly Maguires by process of law. Five attorneys appeared for the defense, of whom two, at least, were able lawyers and a third was the Republican member of Congress for Schuylkill County. The prisoners demanded separate trials and the commonwealth elected to begin with Michael J. Doyle. The testimony presented on its part was complete. The defense was a carefully manufactured alibi but as it was evident that the commonwealth stood ready to prosecute for perjury as well as for murder, the counsel for Doyle, either too timid or too honorable to

<sup>3</sup> President of the Lehigh and Wilkesbarre Coal Company.

put upon the stand men who they knew would swear falsely, did not call their witnesses and let the case go to the jury on the evidence of the commonwealth. Three arguments were made by the prosecution; two "stirring appeals to the jury" on behalf of the prisoner. On February 1 the jury brought in a verdict of guilty of murder in the first degree, the first conviction in the anthracite region of a Molly Maguire for a capital crime. Later the judge refused a motion for a new trial and sentenced Doyle to be hanged.

Kerrigan decided to turn state's evidence and, before the conviction of Doyle, told Albright and Hughes (who were accompanied by a stenographer) the story of the murders of Jones and Yost and disclosed the inside workings of the society of Molly Maguires. On February 4 Campbell was arrested as accessory before the fact to the murder of Jones and on the same day the two principals and three accessories to the murder of Yost were committed to the Pottsville jail. On February 10 two men were arrested for the murder of Sanger and Uren at Ravens Run.

The Molly Maguires were much alarmed. They knew that the arrests of Campbell and of the murderers of Yost were due to the disclosures of Kerrigan and they were bitterly indignant at his treachery, but they did not believe that the arrest of Sanger's assassin could be laid to his charge, as Kerrigan was in a different division and had no intimate connection with the murder. It was rumored that a detective was in their midst and suspicion fell upon McParlan. Having heard the report more than once Jack Kehoe, one of the most adroit men in the society, became convinced of its truth and sent the word around that McParlan (McKenna) was a detective and that members must beware of him. Hearing this, McParlan went to Kehoe and demanded, "Why do you spread these reports about me?" "I heard it from a conductor on the Reading Railroad", was the answer. "He called me into the baggage car and said that I might be certain that you were a detective. I told him it was not the first time I had heard the charge made against you." McParlan denounced the charge as a slander and demanded a convention of the order to investigate the matter. "I will let the society try me", he said, "and if I find out the man who is lying about me, I will make him suffer. It is a terrible thing to charge a man like me with being a detective." They agreed that a county convention should be called and, as Kehoe was too nervous to write the notices, he asked McParlan to write them in his name, who therefore summoned in proper form all the body-masters of the county to convene at Shenandoah for his own trial (about March 1).

Meanwhile the report concerning McParlan gained force, helped on by the assertion of the leading attorney for the defense of Doyle that, in some unaccountable way, the attorneys for the commonwealth got hold of the minute details of their line of defense. On the day before the one fixed for the convention, McParlan, while at Pottsville, was charged with being a detective by another Molly, who further asserted that the convention at Shenandoah was a game of his to get all the body-masters and officers together and have them arrested by Captain Linden<sup>4</sup> and his Coal and Iron police. To allay this suspicion McParlan went at once to see Linden and asked him not to have the police there at all. "I believe", he said, "I can fight them right through and make them believe I am no detective." Linden reluctantly consented but told McParlan that he was running a very great risk.

Linden was right. Earlier in the day, McParlan had seen Kehoe and the two arranged to travel together to Shenandoah that evening that they might be there for the convention early on the morrow. But Kehoe stole away thither on an earlier train, got together McAndrew, the body-master of the Shenandoah division, and a number of the Mollies, telling them that beyond doubt McParlan was a detective and that he must be killed. "For God's sake have him killed to-night", he added, "or he will hang half the people in Schuylkill County." The men consented, McAndrew with reluctance as he was fond of McParlan. Kehoe went home but a dozen men assembled a little below the station, armed with axes, tomahawks, and sledges, and waited for the coming of McParlan, intending to inveigle him down there on the track and kill him, avoiding the use of firearms in order not to attract the policemen around the station.

Meanwhile McParlan was travelling towards Shenandoah on the evening train, his suspicions aroused from Kehoe's failure to join him as agreed, and they grew, when he was not met as usual at the station by five or six comrades to discuss the news and have a drink. He went into the saloon of a member whom he found so nervous and excited that he could hardly open the bottle of porter called for. Walking on he met another member, ordinarily friendly, who hardly spoke to him, then another, Sweeney, who was less cold but of whom he was so suspicious, that, as they went on together, he invented some excuse to make him walk ahead lest he should receive

<sup>4</sup>Linden was assistant superintendent of the Pinkerton Agency in Chicago, was sent to the anthracite region and became captain of the Coal and Iron police, his calling of detective being known only to the few whose guiding hands were in the enterprise.

a blow from behind. He kept his hand on his revolver ready to meet an attack. Arriving at McAndrew's he noticed two Mollies on guard and that his friend was nervous and uneasy. Sweeney went out, came back again, and threw a little piece of snow at McAndrew as a signal for action to which the latter replied, "My feet are sore; I guess I will take off my boots", which was as much as to say "I have abandoned the project." With truth did McAndrew tell McParlan next day, "I saved your life last night." McParlan, on the alert, knew something was up and after a question about the meeting said good-night and started for his boarding house but not by his usual route, taking instead a byway through a swamp. He slept little for he was constantly on his guard against an attempt at assassination.

Next morning there was no sign of a convention and McParlan made up his mind to go to Girardville and demand of Kehoe the reason. Hiring a horse and cutter he took McAndrew with him; and two other Mollies in a similar conveyance started after them. "What does this mean", asked McParlan? "Look here", was the reply, "you had better look out, for that man who is riding in that sleigh behind you calculates to take your life. Have you got your pistols?" "Yes", said McParlan. "So have I", returned McAndrew, "and I will lose my life for you. I do not know whether you are a detective or not but I do not know anything against you. I always knew you were doing right and I will stand by you. Why don't they try you fair?" Then McAndrew told of the plot of the previous day adding, "You will find out that you are in a queer company this minute." "I do not give a cent", replied McParlan, "I am going down to Kehoe's." To Kehoe's they went. Kehoe was surprised to see McParlan still alive in company with the men who had agreed to kill him. Yet they fell to discussing the burning question when Kehoe intimated to him that he had learned his true character from Father O'Connor. On McParlan's determining to go to see the priest at Mahanoy Plane, a number of Mollies went along. The one to whom the killing of the detective was assigned got too drunk to make the attempt; but on their return to Shenandoah McAndrew would not permit McParlan to go to his boarding house for fear of assassination but insisted that he should sleep in his (McAndrew's) quarters.

Having failed to find Father O'Connor when he left Kehoe's, McParlan made a second unsuccessful attempt on the next day, but not caring to pass another night at Shenandoah he went on to Pottsville. "There", he said to Captain Linden, "I have come to the

conclusion that they have had a peep at my hand and that the cards are all played." Shadowed by Linden, he went on the following day to Mahanoy Plane, and had a long talk with Father O'Connor, learning that not only O'Connor, but two other Catholic priests as well, believed that he was a Pinkerton detective in the employ of the Reading Company. Satisfied that his mission was generally known he returned to Pottsville that evening and next morning (March 5 or 6) left for Philadelphia, ending his experience of nearly two years as a Molly Maguire.

A word here should be said concerning the position of the Roman Catholic clergy. Father O'Connor's aversion to McParlan was not due to any love for the Molly Maguires. On the contrary he had denounced them from the pulpit and read only a short time previous the pastoral letter of Archbishop Wood excommunicating all lawless societies and especially the Molly Maguires. But Father O'Connor looked upon McParlan as a stool-pigeon, egging his associates on to crime in order to enhance his own glory and profit as a detective.

Wood was the archbishop of Philadelphia and had almost from the first been cognizant of and sympathetic with the means which Gowen employed to bring the Molly Maguires to justice.

McParlan was the chief witness for the commonwealth in the trial of the murderers of Yost. The Molly Maguires knew Jim McKenna, a man with bushy red hair and rough dress, a brawler and a roysterer, "the biggest Molly of us all". They saw before them in the witness-box James McParlan, a man slightly built but muscular, of fair complexion, closely cut dark chestnut hair, above a broad full forehead and grey eyes. Dressed plainly in black, wearing spectacles, with an intelligent and grave countenance and gentlemanly bearing, he resembled a college professor rather than a rowdy, frequenting bar-rooms and saloons. McParlan told his wonderful story slowly, without an attempt at theatrical display, and he was listened to with breathless interest by judges, attorneys, prisoners, and officers of the law. He remained upon the witness-stand for four days and instead of being shaken by the searching cross-examination to which he was subjected, he was able to add evidence which told against the prisoners and which had been objected to on his examination-in-chief. Accurate and truthful, he excelled as witness as he had as detective and, when he finished his testimony, the case of the commonwealth was won.

McParlan testified in a number of subsequent cases. More of the Mollies turned state's evidence and proof was piled upon proof. Conviction after conviction for murder followed and death sentences

were pronounced. Many of the cases were taken up to the Supreme Court on writs of error with the result that the sentences of the lower courts were affirmed.

On June 21, 1877, at Mauch Chunk four Molly Maguires were hanged, three for the murder of Jones, one for the murder of Powell in 1871. At Pottsville six were hanged, five for the murder of Yost and one for the murder of Sanger. In the meantime arrests had been made of Mollies who had committed murders previous to 1875. For the killing in Columbia County of a mine superintendent in 1868 three were convicted and on March 25, 1878, were hanged at Bloomsburg. For killing a breaker-boss in 1862 the mighty Jack Kehoe was found guilty of murder in the first degree and on December 18, 1878, was hanged at Pottsville.

In all, nineteen Mollie Maguires were hanged; a greater number for lesser crimes than murder received various sentences of imprisonment. The majesty of the law was vindicated. The Molly Maguires were crushed. Never did the society reappear in the anthracite region. The weapon of coolly devised and violent assassination was never afterwards employed on the part of Labor. The region did not again suffer from the lawlessness which had prevailed there from 1865 to 1875. That this result was accomplished, not by vigilance committees and lynchings but by the regular, patient, and considerate process of law, was due to Gowen, McParlan, Parrish, the bench of Carbon, Schuylkill, Columbia, and Northumberland counties, and the lawyers who acted for the commonwealth.

The racial characteristics shown in this story are worth a passing note. All the Molly Maguires were Irish. McParlan who exposed them and served his employer with stanch fidelity was Irish, and Gowen, to whom the greatest credit is due for the destruction of the society, was the son of an Irishman.

A peculiar feature stands out, differentiating the Molly Maguires from any criminal organization (so far as I know) of any other peoples of the Indo-European family. We read of strong drink and carousing, of robbery and murder, but nowhere, during the orgies of whiskey, of dissolute women. We read of wives and families, of marriage and the giving in marriage, of childbirth but nowhere of the appearance of the harlot. The Irishman, steeped in crime, remained true to the sexual purity of his race.

The characteristic failings of the Celts, as the ancient Romans knew them, were intensified in their Irish descendants by the seven centuries of misgovernment of Ireland by England. Subject to tyranny at home the Irishman, when he came to America, too often

translated liberty into license and so ingrained was his habit of looking upon government as an enemy, that, when he became the ruler of cities and stole the public funds, he was, from his point of view, only despoiling the old adversary. With his traditional hostility to government, it was easy for him to become a Molly Maguire, while the English, Scotch, and Welsh immigrant shrank from such a society with horror.

JAMES FORD RHODES.